
Statement regarding U.S. appeals court decision overturning the preliminary injunction on human embryonic stem cell research

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The leadership of the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine, the state's stem cell agency, applauds the decision of the U.S. Court of Appeals that overturned a lower court's preliminary injunction that halted federal funding of human embryonic stem cell research.

This move allows federal agencies such as the NIH to continue funding embryonic stem cell research pending a final decision by the district court and the appellate courts.

"This decision provides hope to all those families looking to stem cell research to provide cures for diseases such as heart disease, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease and diabetes," said Robert Klein, chairman of the CIRM Governing Board. "However, opponents of stem cell research are still slowing progress both at the federal level and in many states. Fortunately, in California, the voters saw the wisdom of providing a stable source of funding for stem cell research."

On August 23, 2010, U.S. District Judge Royce Lamberth issued an injunction that froze federal funding for embryonic stem cell research. The U.S. government appealed that injunction, which was put on hold by an appeals court in September. Today's decision by the appeals court vacates the injunction. The U.S. District Court has yet to issue a final decision in the case.

CIRM President Alan Trounson said the court case creates uncertainty for stem cell scientists who might turn their labs toward research with more stable funding sources. "While we may be able to assume that this decision will influence the District Court, we cannot be sure of this. We must also not take for granted if in the likely even the Supreme Court hears this case that it will rule in favor of stem cell research. The fight is far from over, which makes stable funding from sources like CIRM so important."

CIRM provides a stable source of stem cell funding that has created a community of dedicated stem cell scientists in academia and industry within the state. The agency funds all types of stem cell research—embryonic, adult, cancer and iPS—and funds research at all stages of discovery.

"Advances in all areas of stem cell science require insights gained through work with human embryonic stem cells," said Ellen Feigal, Vice President of Research and Development at CIRM. "Progress in this field will move forward most effectively with predictable, sustained funding."

With possibly years still to go before this legal case is resolved, CIRM will continue providing a stable source of funding for those researchers who have committed their labs to pursuing new therapies based on work with human embryonic stem cells. Through this ongoing funding, CIRM expects to be able to continue to leverage California's investment through its Collaborative Funding Partners, grant-making agencies in nine countries and Maryland and New York.

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